

Testimony of John Chiero, Executive Director for the Boys and Girls Club
of Greater Waterbury for Bill 529 for the State of Connecticut

February 14, 2013

My name is John Chiero, I am the Executive Director for the Boys and Girls Club of Greater Waterbury. I am here today to testify on behalf of the passage of the proposed Senate Bill 529, an act authorizing bonds of the state of Connecticut in the amount of \$250,000 which will be used by the Dept. of Economic and Community Development for the purpose of providing a grant-in-aid to the Boys and Girls Club of Greater Waterbury. The Boys and Girls Club of Greater Waterbury was incorporated 125 years ago and our current facility was built in 1964. The last time the roof was replaced was in 1982. It is over 30 years old and we are in dire need of a new roof. Due to the leaky roof the gym floor has been ruined, ceiling tiles have had to continually be replaced and we have had to place buckets on the floor in various spots to catch the water after a rain storm or melting snow. We have had four contractors inspect the roof and all have said that the roof has outlived its useful life and needs to be replaced. There are no other options. To delay this option will lead to a further deterioration of the building.

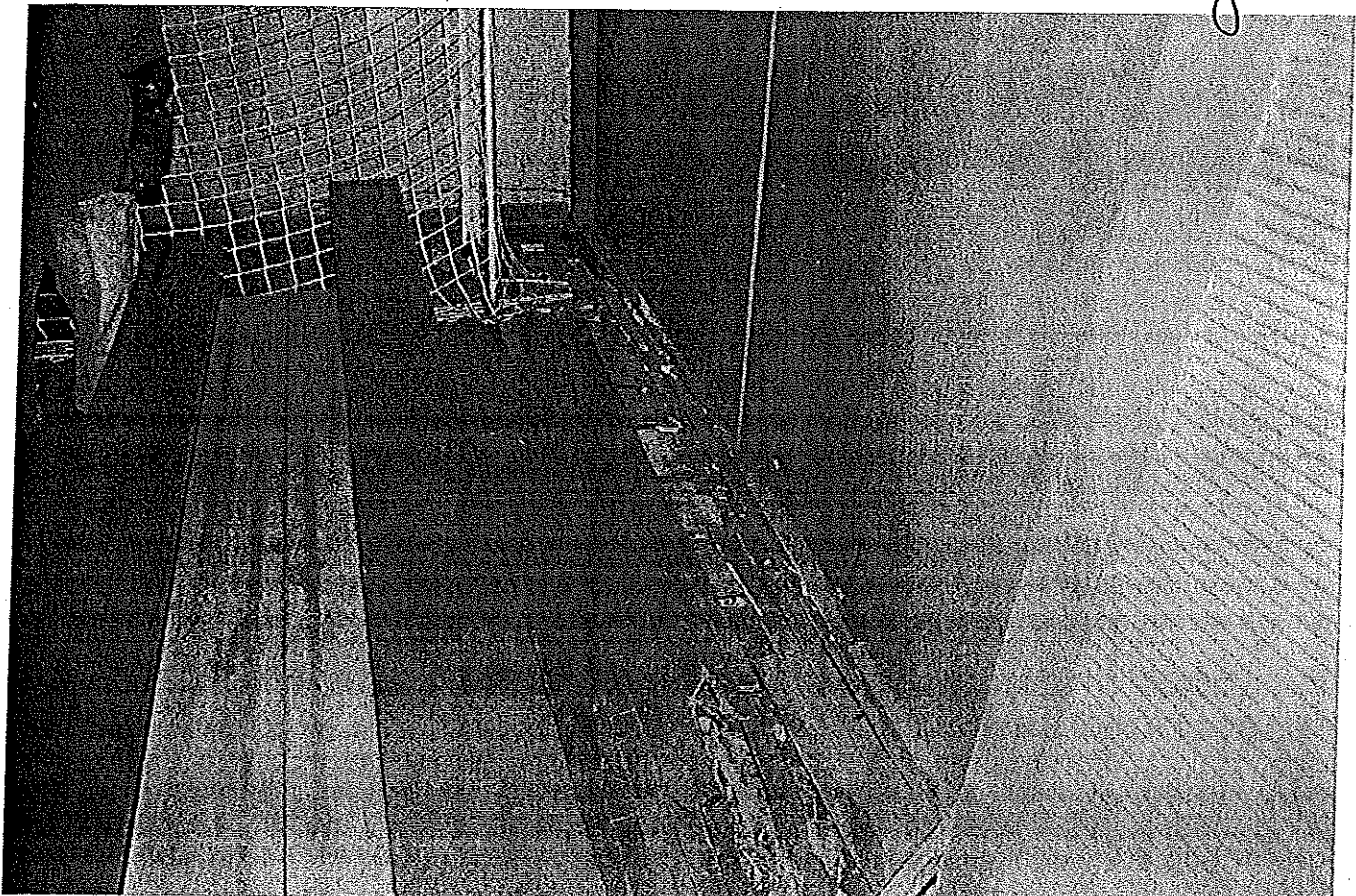
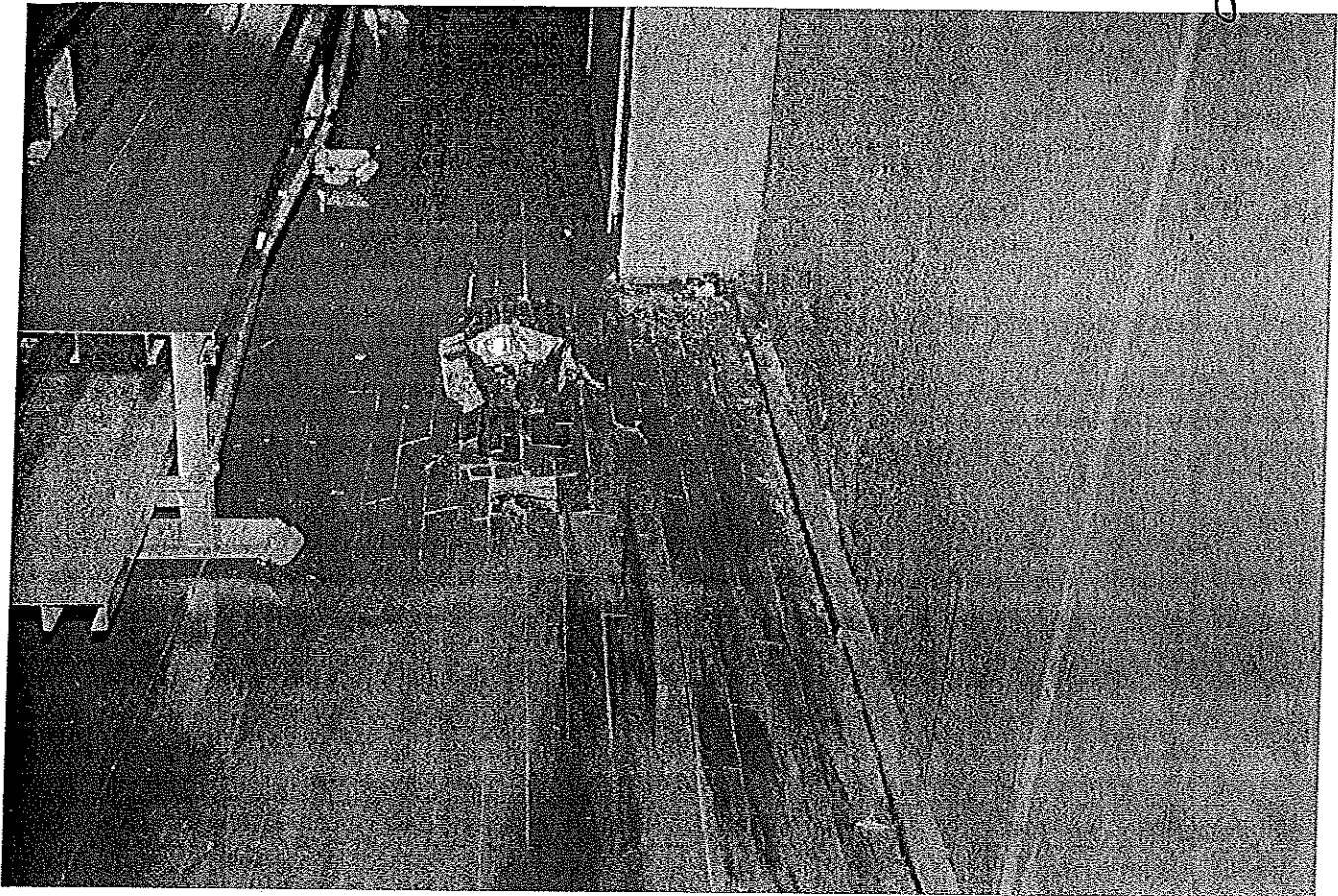
The club currently has on average 150 to 200 children a day that come to the club during the school year. The children are bussed to the club from 9 schools. Most of the children come from families that are at or below the federal poverty level. When they come to the club we provide them with a quiet place to do their homework with assistance from a staff member. Also we have programs that teach good character and citizenship and healthy lifestyles. Academic success, good character and citizenship and healthy lifestyles are the Boys and Girls Club Priority Outcomes that we teach the children so that they will have a chance to succeed in life. We do all of this for a minimal membership fee.

By giving us the money to repair our roof we will be able to provide a safe and secure environment for many more children to come to the club to learn and grow. These children are our future. We need to give them a chance to succeed.

There is a quote I read recently that I felt was simple but profound. It said, "A child only grows up once". We only have one chance to do it right. Please help us.

Lastly, I have added some pictures to the package I submitted that graphically shows the damage the leaky roof has caused to our building. Since I have a limited time to speak I think the old adage of a picture is worth a thousand words will hold true here.

Thank you



Gym Floor

